

BOMAR NOMINATION

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

THE NOMINATION OF MARY AMELIA BOMAR TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SEPTEMBER 21, 2006



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BOMAR NOMINATION

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2006

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:10 a.m., in room SD-628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Pete V. Domenici, chairman, presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. PETE V. DOMENICI, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO

The CHAIRMAN. Please come to order.

We are, today, here for the purpose of considering the nomination of Mary Bomar to be the Director of the National Park Service.

Ms. Bomar, welcome to the committee, and congratulations on your nomination to this important position within the Department of the Interior.

I note that you have had extensive experience in a variety of positions within the Park Service, and so, I know that you are acutely aware of the magnitude of work and the responsibility that you agree to when you undertake this job. And thank you for agreeing to assume such a demanding position, one that is extremely important to every member of this committee.

And I understand that you have a family present today, and that they are extremely pleased and proud that you have been asked to do this work and that you have assumed this mantle. You may introduce them now, if you would like to do so.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is my husband, Milton Bomar.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir.

Ms. BOMAR. And our daughter, Donna Cook.

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Welcome to all of you.

Before we begin this testimony, Ms. Bomar, our colleagues, Senators Specter and Santorum, have indicated a desire to speak in your behalf, and they may do so now.

STATEMENT OF HON. ARLEN SPECTER, U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Senator SPECTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm delighted to join my distinguished colleague Senator Santorum in our enthusiastic support for Ms. Bomar's nomination. I shall be brief, because I had to leave the Judiciary Committee,

where we're trying to vote out circuit judges, and ask unanimous consent that my full statement be made a part of the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be made a part of the record.

Senator SPECTER. I have gotten to know Mrs. Bomar very well as a result of her work for the National Park System for the Northeast Region, headquartered in Philadelphia, and she is a woman of outstanding ability and equally pleasant personality. She is a native of Leicester, England, and has an intriguing British accent. And somehow with those dulcet tones and that interesting accent, what she has to say has extra force.

When I walked in, today, I saw she was out of uniform. She has a very smart uniform. She looks right out of central casting in Hollywood—

[Laughter.]

Senator SPECTER [continuing]. And she carries, with that, enormous talent.

She has had quite a number of very important positions. She became a citizen in 1977, was in the Air Force for 12 years, and my full statement will show her extensive work in the Park Service.

I believe that President Bush has made an outstanding selection in Mary Bomar, and I am very confident she will do an outstanding job. She has wrestled with one of the toughest problems that I have seen, and that is the issue of a fence around Independence Hall. And there are many of us who do not believe that that is necessary for security reasons, although we defer to the experts, but Mrs. Bomar has agreed to take another look to make Independence Hall accessible to the public. The Constitution was signed there on September 17, 1787. The Declaration of Independence was written a block away. We have plaques on the sidewalk outside of Independence Hall, where Abraham Lincoln stood in 1863, when John Kennedy stood in 1962, and where Senator Santorum and I stand very, very frequently.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for accommodating my request to speak early. And I have already told Senator Santorum that this is one speech of his I'm going to have to miss.

[Laughter.]

Senator SPECTER. If I may be excused.

[The prepared statement of Senator Specter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ARLEN SPECTER, U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased today to introduce Mary Bomar, Northeast Regional Director of the National Park Service as President Bush's nominee to serve as the 17th Director of the National Park Service. I have had the pleasure of personally working with Mrs. Bomar on a number of issues relating to national parks in Pennsylvania, and know her to be a strong advocate for their preservation. Mrs. Bomar demonstrates an unparalleled ability to open lines of communications between diverse interest groups and to find creative approaches to meeting the needs of visitors, communities, business, city, state and the resources entrusted to her care.

Mrs. Bomar's leadership in the park management of the reconstruction of Independence Mall is a strong example of her excellent leadership skills and dedication to collaboration. The Independence Mall revitalization required a dynamic modern public space be created to engage Americans from all walks of life in a way that ensured a compatible fit with the buildings and grounds that comprise the park's historic core. During her two and a half years as Superintendent of Independence National Historic Park, Mrs. Bomar reached out to and worked with the City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Annenberg Foundation and others to plan the transformation of Independence Mall into a truly spectacular gateway to our nation's birthplace.

When the Park Service is faced with sensitive issues, I am confident that Mrs. Bomar will listen and explore solutions built on consensus while not compromising the mission of the National Park Service. She is extremely inclusive in her dealings with communities and her willingness to take on tough issues utilizing a cooperative approach would be an outstanding example for other federal managers. In my experiences with Mrs. Bomar, she has exhibited her commitment to sound business practices, civic engagement and working with Congress.

By way of background, Mrs. Bomar was raised in Leicester, England and became a United States citizen in 1977. She joined the National Park Service in 1990 after spending twelve years in the United States Air Force. She began her Park Service career in Texas as Chief of Administration at Amistad National Recreation Area, then as a manager at San Antonio Missions National Historic Park. Mrs. Bomar served as Acting Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado before moving to Oklahoma to initiate start-up Park Service operations at the Oklahoma City National Memorial. While in Oklahoma, she also became the State Coordinator for the National Park Service.

Mrs. Bomar is above all, an honest, intelligent, skilled professional. I look forward to continuing an outstanding working relationship with Mrs. Bomar as the Director of the National Park Service, and encourage the Committee to speedily recommend her approval to the full Senate.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Specter.

Now, Senator Santorum, would you care to testify before the committee? If so, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICK SANTORUM, U.S. SENATOR
FROM PENNSYLVANIA**

Senator SANTORUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am very honored to be here to introduce Mary Bomar to the committee. And, while, as you hear, she is not a native of Pennsylvania, she has spent a great deal of time, over the last several years, in Pennsylvania. And I got to know her first when she came to Pennsylvania to run the Independence National Park in Philadelphia.

When she came there, I will tell you that the relationships between the Park Service and the city and the State and those of us on the Federal delegation was anything but positive. It was a very difficult time. There were lots of issues that were in play, everything from interpretive activities at the Park Service to the building of a new National Constitution Center, which everyone in Pennsylvania and the city wanted to do, but the Park Service was, let's just put it this way, less than cooperative. And she came there under, again, the most difficult circumstances, and just did an outstanding job in calmly, methodically working through the process, making sure that all voices were heard—not, certainly, giving everybody everything they wanted, but doing it the right way, and, more importantly, doing it, as opposed to just making excuses why you can't do it. And that impressed me more than anything else, that this is someone who wants to find solutions to problems instead of finding more problems to problems.

And so, I can tell you, from my experience with her, she has been just an outstanding public servant, really—as Senator Specter said, really out of central casting, but not because of how she looks, although I'm not—she looks great—

[Laughter.]

Senator SANTORUM [continuing]. But because of what she does. And so, I'm excited to be here. She has continued to work as a regional director, again, on a variety of different issues.

Again, another problem area, Valley Forge National Military Park, they're—we are in the process of trying to build a Center for the American Revolution. There is no museum dedicated to the American Revolution, the entire Revolution. We want to do a national museum at Valley Forge. Again, instead of looking for ways, as some here in Washington and other places are looking for ways not to get this done, she has been terrific in working with us to provide a truly world-class, first-class interpretive experience at Valley Forge for the remembrance of, obviously, one of the most significant events in this country's history.

So, my hat is off to her. I was honored—and I mean that—to be here to introduce her, and to enthusiastically recommend her to the committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Now, are there any other Senators who want to make opening remarks?

Would you please take your seat.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF BINGAMAN, U.S. SENATOR
FROM NEW MEXICO**

Senator BINGAMAN. Mr. Chairman, let me just say, very briefly, that I also welcome Ms. Bomar and have heard great things about her career, her civil service career as a Park Service employee, and congratulate her on this nomination, and look forward to supporting her.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Any other Senators desire to make opening remarks?

Senator Thomas.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CRAIG THOMAS, U.S. SENATOR
FROM WYOMING**

Senator THOMAS. Just very briefly. I just want to welcome Mary to the committee. We have met, and I'm very pleased that she's interested in taking this job. Wyoming, of course, is a very proud park State. We have the first park, in Yellowstone, and I'm flying home this weekend to celebrate the centennial of the first monument, Devil's Tower.

So, I just have a very vested interest in this, and look forward to working with you. We have 390 units now. It's very difficult to keep track of all these things. But, certainly, we'll be working together, and we look forward to receiving your testimony.

Thank you.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you very much, Senator Thomas.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Salazar, would you care to make any remarks, please?

**STATEMENT OF HON. KEN SALAZAR, U.S. SENATOR
FROM COLORADO**

Senator SALAZAR. Thank you very much, Chairman Domenici and Ranking Member Bingaman.

I have a full statement for the record that I will submit, but I want to just, this morning, say to you, Mary, I very much enjoyed meeting with you. I look forward to working with you on the Na-

tional Park System issues, especially with regard to the maintenance and backlog issues, the visitor centers. And, in my State, as I'm sure all of us do, we have our own parochial interests, such as making the Rocky Mountain National Park into a wilderness area, and looking at some of the other opportunities that we have within the State will be a high priority of mine. I look forward to working with you. I look forward to also supporting you on this vote.

[The prepared statement of Senator Salazar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KEN SALAZAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Bingaman. Welcome, Mary Bomar. Congratulations on your nomination.

I was pleased to meet with you the other day and to hear about your experiences as the Acting Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park. We in Colorado are very proud of our 12 National Park units and I am delighted that you have spent time among them.

Your nomination to be the director of the National Park Service comes at a watershed moment for our Parks. Just a few weeks ago, the Park Service finalized its new management policies, which, I believe, reinforce and clarify the Park Service's mandate to conserve and protect our nation's crown jewels. The final draft emerged after a difficult and often contentious process, in which this Committee, Park enthusiasts, employees, and the public voiced their strong support for preserving the Park Service's bedrock principle of conservation. I appreciate Secretary Kempthorne's leadership in finalizing a draft of the management policies that will serve us well for years to come.

Your nomination also coincides with Secretary Kempthorne's announcement of an ambitious plan for the Park Service for the next decade. In August, on the Park Service's 90th anniversary, Secretary Kempthorne laid out a vision for how we will prepare the Park system for its 100 anniversary in 2016. The National Park Centennial Challenge, as he called it, is an opportunity to polish the gems of our public lands—it is a chance to recommit ourselves to the mandate of the Organic Act, a chance to make new investments in our Parks, and a chance to find creative solutions to the challenges facing these beloved national treasures. I applaud Secretary Kempthorne's lofty vision. We can and must rise to the challenge that he has set before us.

With a strong set of management policies, Secretary Kempthorne's Centennial Challenge, and an extraordinary team of dedicated employees, the new director will be well-positioned to confront the challenges facing the Park Service.

First among these challenges is the growing maintenance backlog at our Parks—the current estimate places the backlog at somewhere between \$4.5 and \$9.7 billion. In 2000, the President, pledged to provide enough funding for the Parks to eliminate the maintenance backlog. The backlog has only grown since that pledge.

Second, budget cuts have forced reductions in visitor services. You note in your testimony that our Parks are places where people come to learn—they are our universities. We need to find ways to restore our commitment to education at the Parks—visitor services have suffered from the budget cuts of recent years.

Third, each region and each unit of the Park Service faces its own set of challenges. In some places, diminished air quality is clouding views and hurting ecosystems. In other places, security and law enforcement are growing concerns. I would hope that you would continue to empower your superintendents and employees to find innovative, locally-driven and supported solutions that fit the needs of a Park.

Finally, I would like to ask for your support for my Rocky Mountain National Park Wilderness Act. For forty years, Rocky Mountain National Park has been managed as wilderness, but Congress has not yet officially designated it as wilderness. My bill, which enjoys the unanimous support of the local communities and has the backing of the National Park Service, would ensure the permanent protection of Rocky's wild character. I would ask for the continued assistance of your agency in completing the long-overdue task of designating this wilderness.

I look forward to discussing these issues today with you, Ms. Bomar. Again, congratulations on your nomination.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, Senator Salazar. Thank you for your kindness shown to me in our visit the other day. I appreciate it. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, Madam, it's always a special privilege for this committee to see to it that this position is given adequate consideration by the members. We take a particular pride in concurring with the President in a nomination of a park director, and we will do that today, as we have in the past. We all share the pleasure and the pride of you moving up to this position from within, and we know that that makes you a special person, who will take this job with a special meaning and a special emphasis on its historic significance for all Americans.

With that, we will begin. The rules of the committee, which apply to all nominees, not just you, require that you be sworn in, in connection with their testimony.

Please rise, ma'am, and raise your right hand.

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Ms. BOMAR. I do.

The CHAIRMAN. Please be seated.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Before you begin your statement, I will ask you three questions that are addressed to each nominee before they proceed any further.

Will you be available to appear before the committee and other congressional committees to represent Department positions and respond to issues of concern to the Congress?

Ms. BOMAR. I will.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you aware of any personal holdings, investments, or interests that could constitute a conflict or create the appearance of such a conflict, should you be confirmed and assume the office to which you have been nominated by the President?

Ms. BOMAR. Mr. Chairman, my investments, personal holdings, and other interests have been reviewed both by myself and the appropriate ethics counselors within the Federal Government. I have taken appropriate action to avoid any conflicts of interest. There are no conflicts of interest, or appearances thereof, to my knowledge.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you involved or do you have any assets held in blind trust?

Ms. BOMAR. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, we're going to proceed now to your statement. I encourage you to summarize your formal statement, as the full text of it will be included in the record. At the conclusion of your statement, we will have questions from Senators.

Senators will please note that you may submit additional questions for the record until 5 p.m. today. So, I encourage that you, also, keep your oral questions brief.

Please proceed, ma'am.

**TESTIMONY OF MARY AMELIA BOMAR, NOMINEE TO BE
DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT
OF THE INTERIOR**

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I will do the same.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today on my nomination to be the 17th Director of the National Park Service. Words cannot express my feelings of joy, excitement, and honor in being nominated by the President for this post.

To be entrusted with the care of the crown jewels of America, our national parks, is the ultimate honor for me as a career public servant. I thank the President and Secretary Kempthorne for the confidence they have demonstrated in me through this nomination.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I would like to enter my entire statement in the record and summarize my remarks.

While I grew up as a city gal in Leicester, England, I had the good fortune to live for a while in the United States and to travel to national parks. It was during those travels that I was awed by the grand landscapes and the historic sites that capture so much of America's greatness. I became a U.S. citizen in 1977, and I proudly call myself an American, by choice.

In many respects, the position of the National Park Service Director is something for which I have trained my entire life, beginning with my childhood as part of a family that ran a family business and instilled in us an appreciation also for America's special places. Then my husband and three children, living on U.S. Air Force bases and working as a civilian employee for the United States Air Force, where I managed large morale and welfare and recreation programs, both in the United States and in Europe.

Having risen to the position of regional director in the National Park Service, I credit my success to my passion for the national parks, my business skills and willingness to become involved, my ability to be decisive, and to many great leaders who have mentored me along the way, and some that are here today. Most of that training occurred in the 12 years that I spent in the intermountain region in the western area and in the old Santa Fe area, prior to my 4 years that I have spent here on the East Coast.

While the mission of the National Park Service remains the same, as it has been since the service's inception in 1916, the way we go about achieving that mission has evolved greatly as we near our centennial in 2016. New challenges and opportunities abound.

On the 90th anniversary of the National Park Service, at the direction of President Bush, Secretary Kempthorne announced a 10-year National Park Centennial Challenge to help guide the service through another century as the world's leading conservation, preservation, and visitor enjoyment agency. The Centennial Challenge will propel us, as an agency, into a new era distinguished by sound government, citizen and philanthropic partnerships that create a better park experience for all visitors and raise the conservation bar for generations yet to come. I look forward to working with each of you to meet this challenge.

While park superintendents and program managers are vested with much authority, it comes with an equal amount of responsibility that demands high-quality results, stellar performance, and the utmost levels of accountability. Our mission requires constant

re-examination to assure that we fulfill park mandates and respond to the changes in the world and in our visitors.

In a work force that comprises civil servants, volunteers, contractors, and partners, the successful leader must have the skills to personally embrace, change, and to foster a climate that encourages others to do the same.

I pledge to you, if confirmed, I will be a leader who demonstrates high ethical standards and promotes transparency in all our activities. I will ensure that we apply scholarly, scientific, and technical information in all our decisionmaking processes. I will continue to put into place a highly-qualified, diverse work force that reflects, truly, the face of America and possesses the management excellence, creativity, and innovation skills necessary to lead the National Park Service in the future.

I will work to foster for parks among the public that a strong—that is, have them strong and proudly wear the uniform, as we do. I will endeavor to find new ways of ensuring that sustainable processes are in place to care for our resources and to improve services to the public, and to search for creative ways of working within our means. We must listen to the American people to ensure we consider the impacts of our decisions on those who live here now and those of future generations.

I work with some of the finest public servants in any government agency today. They are passionate about their work to protect our Nation's great places and welcome the public to them. I would be proud, if confirmed, to lead the National Park Service into a bright future ahead.

Thank you all, sincerely, for the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to any questions that you may have.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bomar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY A. BOMAR, NOMINEE TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. Chairman, Senator Bingaman, and distinguished Members of the Committee: Words cannot begin to express my feelings of joy, excitement, and honor in being nominated by the President of the United States to become the 17th Director of the National Park Service. To be entrusted with the care of the “crown jewels of America,” our national parks, is the ultimate honor for me as a career public servant. I thank the President and Secretary Kempthorne for the confidence they have demonstrated in me through this nomination.

As you well know from your own visits to national parks, you can never meet a park ranger without hearing a story . . . and mine begins as a very young girl.

I am a city gal. My family owned a large manufacturing company in Leicester, England. I was very fortunate to be raised by wonderful parents, with four brothers and one sister. From our very earliest days, we learned the importance of cash flow, the value of the bottom line, and the need for the highest degree of integrity combined with a strong work ethic to truly be successful in life's journey.

I lived in the United States for some time as a child—New York, Chicago, and California. I was fortunate to have a father who loved to travel. We would pack up the station wagon for vacations to the Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, Golden Gate, Mount Rushmore, and many other parks. While living in Chicago, we traveled the “Mother Road of America,” Route 66, all the way to California. An incredible memory forever etched upon my mind is sailing into New York Harbor on the liner *Ile de France* and seeing the Statue of Liberty—the lady rising from the water. Little did I know that one day I would have a role in her care. What an awesome responsibility!

Journeys such as these provided me with an education that no school could have. Seeing and experiencing firsthand America's vast and magnificent scenery, and its

premier historic and cultural sites, instilled a lifelong passion for the importance of preserving these special places. I believe the National Park System is truly the world's largest university.

I am proud to call myself "an American by choice." I took the Oath of Allegiance to the Constitution of the United States on October 28, 1977, in Spokane, Washington. It was a very proud moment for me and my family. I was given a letter from then President Jimmy Carter which stated that my citizenship gave me the right and also the responsibility to take part in the business of our Government.

In many respects, the position of National Park Service Director is something for which I have trained my entire life: first, as part of a family whose economic well-being depended on the success of our business and which instilled in me a passion for America's special places; then, as I met my own "man from Missouri," a handsome young man in the U.S. Air Force, who would become my husband of forty plus years. We raised three lovely children while living on U.S. military bases around the country and the world: Biloxi, Mississippi, for three years; Spokane, Washington, for four years; Alpena, Michigan, for three years; Phoenix, Arizona, for four years; as well as bases in Europe. As a civilian employee for the U.S. Air Force, I managed large Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs in both Europe and the United States. As a result of my leadership skills, one center I managed was designated as the Air Force European MWR managerial training center. Dependent on nonappropriated funds, satisfied customers were vital to support the MWR facilities and programs. As a head trainer and roving staff assister for the Air Force in the MWR arena, I knew how to spot management problems and fix them quickly. My business acumen and willingness to address issues earned me an Air Force Manager of the Year Award, a Meritorious Service Award, and other performance awards.

The management skills I developed in my work for the Air Force are applicable in my work for the National Park Service, where it has been an honor and privilege to work the past 16 years. Almost all of my National Park Service tenure has been in the field, including assignments as an Administrative Officer, Circuit Rider/Staff Assister, Management Assistant, Deputy Superintendent, Superintendent, State Coordinator; and presently I am the Director of the Northeast Region.

I credit my success to my passion for these very special places—the national parks; my business skills and willingness to become involved; my ability to be decisive; and to the many great leaders who have mentored me along the way. As a management circuit rider in the southwest, I was assigned to many national parks and offices, including the then-Santa Fe Regional Office, the Intermountain Regional, Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, Capulin Volcano National Monument, parks in Texas, and many others that were facing serious challenges. I worked to identify the root of problems and facilitated solutions with park managers that resolved the issues at hand. It was not "I" who solved the problems, but "we—the team." I feel very fortunate, thanks to well respected previous regional directors, to have had the opportunity to practice my skills. My first superintendency came by way of an assignment as acting superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park. So, as I like to say, I was western-trained for 12 years but came onto the national scene and given exposure in the East just four years ago.

My success in the West led to the superintendency of the Oklahoma City National Memorial—established to mark the events and to honor the victims of the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal building. Working with family members, survivors, and rescue workers, as well as with a Presidentially appointed Trust, State, and local officials, was a challenge; but it was a challenge I relished, as I led my team in setting up all aspects of operations for this new site.

After Oklahoma City I became superintendent of Independence National Historical Park, home to Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. Independence National Historical Park, a World Heritage Site, is considered the premier cultural park in the National Park System. The park hosts over five million visitors annually and has over 300 employees with an operating budget that exceeds \$21 million.

Following a tremendous period at Independence, I was honored to be selected as the Northeast Regional Director, where over the past year and half I have focused on improved management practices that have saved \$1.7 million annually in the regional office operational costs. I also developed the first Business Plan for a Regional Office, improved accountability in programs within parks and program offices, and enhanced the performance management system for all park superintendents in the region.

While the mission of the National Park Service remains the same as it has been since the Service's inception in 1916, the way we go about achieving that mission has evolved greatly as we near our centennial in 2016. New challenges and opportu-

nities abound. As passionate stewards of our natural and cultural heritage, it makes sense to gather together to learn from our past and look to the future.

On the 90th Anniversary of the National Park Service, in August, President Bush called on the National Park Service to prepare our national parks to flourish for the next 100 years and beyond. Interior Secretary Kempthorne announced a 10-year National Park Centennial Challenge to help guide the Service through another century as the world's leading conservation, preservation, and visitor enjoyment agency. The Centennial Challenge will propel us as an agency into a new era distinguished by sound government, citizen, and philanthropic partnerships that create a better park experience for all visitors and raise the conservation bar for the generations yet to come. This is a truly wonderful opportunity for the National Park Service, and I look forward to working with each of you to meet the challenge set by the President and Secretary Kempthorne.

While park superintendents and program managers are vested with much authority, it comes with an equal amount of responsibility that demands high quality results, stellar performance, and the utmost levels of accountability. Our mission requires constant reexamination to assure that we fulfill park mandates and respond to changes in the world and in our visitors. In a workforce that comprises civil servants, volunteers, contractors, partners, and others, the successful leader must have the skills to personally embrace change and to foster a climate that encourages others to do the same. Our actions are observed by our employees, partners, and indeed the entire community we serve. I pledge to you that, if confirmed, I will be a leader who demonstrates high ethical standards and promotes transparency in all our activities.

I will ensure that we apply scholarly, scientific, and technical information in the planning, evaluation, and decision-making processes. I will continue to put into place a highly qualified, diverse workforce that reflects the face of America and possesses the management excellence, creativity, and innovation skills necessary to lead the National Park Service into the future.

I will work to continue to foster passion for the parks among the American public that is as strong as it is among those of us who proudly wear the National Park Service uniform—the gray and green. I will work to find new ways of ensuring that sustainable processes are in place to care for our resources and improve services to the public. We must not saddle future generations with the bill, but instead search for creative ways of working within our means to leave an inheritance we can all be proud of. We must listen to the American people and ensure we consider the impacts of our decisions on those who live here now and those of future generations who will visit in the years and centuries ahead.

I look ahead to working with people throughout the Nation—not only the great men and women of the National Park Service, but our many partners, communities, and of course the Congress, to address the challenges facing us and to ensure a legacy for the future generations called for in the Act that established the National Park Service 90 years ago.

I work with some of the finest public servants in any Government agency. They are passionate about their work to protect our Nation's great places and to welcome the public to them. I would be proud, if confirmed, to lead the National Park Service into the bright future ahead.

Thank you all sincerely for the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to any questions you may have for me.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, ma'am. That was an eloquent statement, and we will put the full statement in the record for review by any members or the staff that advise us.

Now we'll proceed from that to the—starting with Senator Bingaman, and proceeding in that order.

Senator Bingaman.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you. And thank you for your very, very eloquent statement.

One issue that has come up in the last year or so, of course, involves the revision of management policies for the National Park Service. As you know, there's a lot of interest in the Park Service, as well as in the Congress, on that. The final version of the new policies retained a key sentence that I just wanted to read to you. It says, "Congress, recognizing that the enjoyment by future generations of the national parks can be ensured only if the superb

quality of park resources and values is left unimpaired, has provided that when there's a conflict between conserving resources and values, and providing for enjoyment of them, conservation is to be predominant." This is how courts have consistently interpreted the Organic Act.

I would just ask for any comments you would have on that statement. I was encouraged when that was included in the revised management policies, and wanted to see if that was something that you agreed with.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes, thank you very much, Senator Bingaman.

And I would like to say that going through this revision over this last year—a thank you to the committee for your support—that it has certainly brought clarity to many of our policies. And I know, as one coming from a superintendent in the field, that always on my desk was the management policies. These policies guide our everyday operations within our parks. I am confident that a copy of the management policies is on every superintendent's desk. It is part of our operational tools that we should be referring to. It is an essential part of our tools, and we will make sure, if I am confirmed, Senator, that the policies are implemented correctly.

Thank you.

Senator BINGAMAN. All right, thank you.

One of the challenges that the Park Service has, as well as a lot of our Federal agencies that manage Federal property, is getting the right balance between security and maintaining open access to our sites. I know this is an issue that's come up in connection with the National Historic Park in Philadelphia.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes, sir.

Senator BINGAMAN. I think there's a proposal, as I understand it, to construct a 7-foot-high security fence at Independence Square, which I gather has been quite controversial. Again, do you have any comments that you could give us about the appropriateness of a fence at that site, or any more general comments?

Ms. BOMAR. Yes. First, let me say that I was absolutely honored to be the superintendent at Independence National Historical Park. And after 9/11, as you know, we certainly had to make many very tough decisions working through the security issues, trying to balance visitor service, to make sure that we provide the very best visitor experience possible, but also safety for our visitors. We have worked through many conceptual designs.

As you know, there are 19 key assets identified by the Department of the Interior, and, as an icon park, it requires specific security measures. However, there is an appropriation of \$800,000 to provide fencing, and the reason that we applied, after working through the National Park Service, the Washington office, was because we felt that the bicycle barricades were so unsightly at many of our sites. To purchase and to start looking at this new design, that kicked in what we call the environmental assessment process. We extended the time—there was a 30-day public review period—we extended that time for a second 30 days, and the comments overwhelmingly came back to look at a modified version of the security. The two gentlemen that introduced me today, I will gladly work with both Senators to resolve and look at future security measures.

Thank you for the question.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

Senator BINGAMAN. That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

Senator THOMAS [presiding]. OK, thank you. I guess I'm the next victim here.

I'll have several questions, so I'll ask them quickly, and perhaps you can respond fairly quickly.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes, sir.

Senator THOMAS. There's a great deal of diversity in all the parks we have in this country. What experience have you had in the western parks, such as Wyoming, Montana, and others?

Ms. BOMAR. I came to the National Park Service in 1990. My husband was stationed in Del Rio, and that's where I joined the National Park Service. For my first 4 years, I as an administrative officer, one with a strong financial background, in Del Rio, TX, and a regional director gave me an opportunity to be kind of a troubleshooter circuit-rider. And I was given an opportunity, during those 4 years, to visit many parks and help in many areas—e.g., Hubble Trading Post. I lived in a hogan on the reservation for about 4 or 5 weeks; as well as Jean Lafitte and many other National Parks. I have not had the privilege yet of working in your great State, sir.

Senator THOMAS. Good.

Ms. BOMAR. But I look forward to that, if confirmed. However, I actually was always considered western-trained, for 12 years, and really didn't come to the East Coast until 4 years ago, my assignment after Oklahoma City, to Independence NHP.

Senator THOMAS. Good. Well, I hope you'll have an opportunity to visit in the West.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

Senator THOMAS. One of the continuing issues, of course, has been efficiency—park efficiency and accountability. We've been addressing the seemingly endless maintenance. Do you have any particular thoughts about how to approach the maintenance challenge, in terms of—

Ms. BOMAR. Yes, through the Recreation Fee Program, the Repair Rehab Program and the Line-Item Construction Program. First of all, I would like to say, Senator, thank you for your support in working with us on the backlog maintenance. From 1997 to 2005, \$1.18 billion has come into the parks through fee money, and \$500 million, almost, of that funding, sir, has been put toward backlog maintenance. Also, probably about \$500 million toward that amount has gone toward the cost of operations and to visitor services, restoration projects, exhibits. So, I hope that we can stay the course and, with your support, continuing to address the backlog maintenance.

Senator THOMAS. OK.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

Senator THOMAS. I joined with Senator—or Secretary Kempthorne when we visited the park recently, launching the National Park Centennial Challenge. What does this challenge mean to you?

Ms. BOMAR. I think this is such a shot in the arm for the National Park Service. I think we have—opportunities abound with the centennial, yes. It was nice to see you on the NPS Inside, the

next morning with Secretary Kempthorne, celebrating the 90th anniversary of the National Park Service. And I just think that this challenge could be one of the most successful programs ever undertaken by the National Park Service. I see my role to support you, to support Secretary Kempthorne and the President's mandate. And I do feel that—I just think that we all have tremendous partnership opportunities to look forward to in the future. I think the vision of the centennial is—covers a whole gamut of National Park Service programs, and I really, truly look forward to working with you on that, Senator Thomas.

Senator THOMAS. OK.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you. The concessions, of course, is an interesting thing. And, as you know, the Act prohibits fee bidding; nevertheless, we're kind of into that. Possessory interest is becoming more of an issue on some. So, as you know, Park Service owes Congress a progress report on concessions this year.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes.

Senator THOMAS. What's your situation with respect to that report?

Ms. BOMAR. I do know that the National Park Service has placed a strong emphasis on reducing expired concession contracts. Steve Martin, the deputy director, has been working with the National Leadership Council, the regional directors, and there has been a very strong emphasis placed on working with concessions. We now are bringing in the trained personnel to work in the concessions program, and I look forward, if confirmed, Senator, to working with you further to ensure that the report is sent on time to Congress.

Senator THOMAS. Very good.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you very much.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, sir.

Senator THOMAS. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much.

Senator Wyden.

Senator WYDEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Ms. Bomar. I very much enjoyed our visit yesterday, and appreciated the chance to do it.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, Senator Wyden.

Senator WYDEN. As I indicated in our visit, I felt that what the Interior Department's Inspector General said last week was just extraordinary. And I'm going to read you exactly what I found so troubling.

The Inspector General said, last week, and I quote, "Simply stated, short of a crime, anything goes at the highest levels of the Department of the Interior." Now, this is the Department's Inspector General, this is not some outside group. And you, of course, would go on, if confirmed, to be part of the highest level of the Department of the Interior, just as Mr. Devaney indicated. As I told you yesterday in the office, and you've had overnight to reflect on it, I'd like your reaction to Mr. Devaney's comments, for the record, because I think they're almost unprecedented, to have an Inspector General say that the Department has lost its ethical compass,

which is essentially what he said. What would be your reaction to Mr. Devaney's comments?

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you. Yes, it was a pleasure to meet you, also, yesterday, Senator Wyden. And I'd certainly read the testimony and would like to follow up and say—and reiterate again from yesterday that I have always maintained the very highest levels of making sure that we're transparent in any of our business and to make sure that the little white ethical book from the Government sits on my desk for reference. I am very attuned to having very strong ethics and integrity and honesty, and, if I am confirmed, I will certainly make sure that that message is sent out throughout the National Park Service.

Reading the reports, or the testimony, is important, but what I would like to say to you this morning is that Secretary Kempthorne made a statement, and indicated that he would send out a message, which he did, actually, to reinforce to the Department of the Interior that under his administration, he would make sure that we have the highest ethical standards. That message was put out immediately, I believe, after he attended an ethics briefing. I did say, yesterday, "The first thing I did say to my colleagues this past week was, please set me up for my briefing with the ethics OGE this week," because I felt it was very important.

I would follow Secretary Kempthorne's lead and make sure one of the first things that I would do would be to get a letter out to the National Park Service reiterating my commitment to the highest ethical standards and to show transparency in everything we do, sir.

Senator WYDEN. I appreciate that, ma'am. I still would like an answer to the question, though. You have been at the Department for 16 years. Is Mr. Devaney off-base? Is he wrong? What is your assessment of it? And, of course, the reason I also ask is Mr. Devaney has been very critical of Mr. Griles, who, of course, was involved with the Park Service, where you're going to head. So, could you give me your assessment of whether you think Mr. Devaney, the Department's Inspector General, is off-base?

Ms. BOMAR. Sir, I understand that the final report is not out yet. I have read the testimony. I have not had an opportunity to read the full final report, and I do not—I do not know, firsthand, all of the details or the circumstances with Mr. Griles, but I will assure you today, Senator, that during my 16 years—you will never see my name in a report like that—that. Again, I will reiterate, I have high ethical standards. Today, I can quote to you the ethical regulation of my 12 years in the Department of Defense, 3030 AF regulation. It is something that is on the radar screen with me every day. Every position I've held in leadership, I have made sure that ethics has been one of the very strong messages that I have sent out to my staff in the past.

Senator WYDEN. To hear you say that you don't want to have your name in one of these reports is very welcome news, ma'am. That's not the kind of thing we've heard in the past, and I sure appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, I don't have any further questions.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, Senator.

Senator WYDEN. And I will tell you, I actually had some additional ones that I was concerned about, about matters with respect to national park scientists having their recommendations overruled. That's apparently what some are alleging at one of the big parks, the Mammoth Cave Park. But the fact that you will come here and say that you're committed to making sure that your name isn't in one of those future Inspector General reports is the kind of commitment I was hoping to hear. I look forward to working with you when you're confirmed.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator WYDEN. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you.

Who's next on our side? Senator Burns.

Senator BURNS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just a couple of questions.

Ms. Bomar, thank you for stepping forward and your service to the Park Service. As you know, Senator Thomas and I, we have—although he's got the lion's share and the crown jewel of them all, it does overlap into Montana, and we have—we face similar challenges, as far as the management of that park.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to spend about 3 or 4 days in that park. We camped, and we rode that country up there. And I'm very concerned about the actual management of the resource. Right now, I think you've got around 4,500, maybe 5,000 head of bison in that park.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes.

Senator BURNS. Coming from a resource background and livestock background, that park cannot carry that many bison or buffalo or however you want to put it. And I'm wondering, have you looked at the master plan on how we get those numbers down to where we don't have a situation—not only from a brucellosis standpoint, but I mean for the park resources. They're eating that park right into the ground. And I'm wondering if you've taken a look at that, and has it caught your attention with regard to the management of not only the wildlife, but also the resources that sustain them?

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, Senator Burns.

During my tenure as the northeast regional director, I do not know firsthand of the issues. We talk very openly as regional directors of the National Leadership Council, about issues that we all face. And Valley Forge, you know, is going through a deer management plan right now, and also the same at Gettysburg. They've handled it very well, especially at Gettysburg with Superintendent Latschar. And if I'm confirmed, I promise I will come back to you and certainly would look forward to working with you on that issue.

Senator BURNS. The same is true about the economics in and around that park. Do you have an attitude, or do you have an opinion on snowmobiles in the park, and winter activities?

Ms. BOMAR. I heard that or was looking at Yellowstone National Park, that they have had a winter plan—a temporary winter-use plan in place for the last 2½ years, and I think that's been extended for the next 3 years. They are now coming out with a draft winter-use plan and also an EIS. I think it's supposed to be coming

out by November this year. So, I look forward to—if confirmed, again, Senator—working with you on this issue.

Senator BURNS. Do you have an attitude about—any thoughts about the use of motorized travel, such as snowmobiles, in a national park?

Ms. BOMAR. Yes, I think it's a balance, and I think, through the study, that will be addressed. I know the superintendents at both those parks, and I know that they will collaborate and use civic engagement to work with the communities. I've had a very strong record, as noted by the two gentlemen who introduced me today. It confirms that throughout my career working with gateway communities, I was very inclusive, going to the table and sitting down and talking about the issues. I am on Governor Rendell's Tourism Partnership Council, and I have always worked very strongly with the communities to make sure that they're involved. I am a staunch supporter of shared leadership to make sure that we work together on these issues and come up with solutions that work for everybody.

Senator BURNS. I look forward to working with you, as I chair Interior Appropriations, as we try to take a look at our backlog of maintenance and the infrastructure of the parks, and also the monies that go back to the parks as a collection of the fees. So, I'm looking forward—I'm going to support your nomination and look forward to working with you on these issues, because they are very, very serious issues in our part of the country. And thank you for your service.

Ms. BOMAR. Senator Burns, thank you very much. And I would like to state, today, that I will be a very strong advocate for funding and for the support of our parks, sir.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Alexander.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Bomar, I'm delighted with your nomination. To see a professional of your caliber in this position is very encouraging.

I'd say to the chairman of the Interior Appropriations, before he leaves, that we might be able to work something out. We might be able to work something out here, Senator Burns.

[Laughter.]

Senator ALEXANDER. All those buffalo, if we could get a small appropriation to trade all of our wild hogs in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park to you, and we'll take a lot of your buffalo in exchange. So, if we could work that out—

[Laughter.]

Senator BURNS. I'll tell you what, you go catch them, I'll order the trucks.

[Laughter.]

Senator ALEXANDER. Ms. Bomar, I have three questions.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes.

Senator ALEXANDER. One is, as important as Yellowstone is—and I'm surrounded by its advocates here—the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has three times as many visitors, and no entrance fee, by law, because when the States of North Carolina, the people, gave the park to the Federal Government, the law was there could never be an entrance fee. So, there is a lot of pressure on the park,

and not as much revenue coming to the park. Will you work with the Congress to try to take a special look at our most visited national park and make sure that it's adequately maintained, because of that pressure and because of the lack of an entrance fee?

Ms. BOMAR. I commit to you today, Senator Alexander, that I absolutely look forward to working with you on that.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you very much.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

Senator ALEXANDER. Second, you may have heard of the North Shore Road, which is sometimes called the "Road To Nowhere" by taxpayer groups and environmental groups and me, who oppose it. The "Bridge To Nowhere" got famous last year in the Congress. This "Road To Nowhere" would make the "Bridge To Nowhere" look like a bargain. It would be about \$600 million, according to the National Park Service's estimates, through the park. It's not necessary. The park's road budget each year is \$8 million. This would be \$600 million. The Governor of North Carolina, the Governor of Tennessee, the Senators from Tennessee, the Swain County government, the Bryson City government, all support a monetary settlement to the local governments in lieu of the road. With all that support for the monetary settlement, and even though the—and the draft environmental impact statement published last January says that that settlement is the environmentally preferred alternative, and the least environmentally damaging practical alternative—don't you think it makes the most sense to accept the monetary settlement, rather than to build the "Road To Nowhere"?

Ms. BOMAR. Senator Alexander, I know that this has been a contentious issue. I'm afraid I don't have all the details on where the EIS actually is in the process, but I would say to you, this morning, that you have a brilliant superintendent there, Dale Ditmanson, who certainly believes in working with you, and certainly with the community, to work on these issues together.

Thank you.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Ms. Bomar.

And, Mr. Chairman, if I could just pose this last question, and you may want to respond later to it.

There has been a role, for a long time, in—well, the strategic plan of the Department of the Interior includes the goal of improving air quality in class I lands, such as the Great Smokies, managed by the Department of the Interior. That's a real problem for us. We have the most polluted national park in America, and we need to work on it.

The new proposed Department's strategic plan that will remain in effect through 2012 doesn't mention air quality at all. According to the NPS's latest air quality assessment, there has been either no improvement or declining air quality at 41 of the 51 class I parks tracked by the National Park Service. Why isn't it still a good idea to let the National Park Service, those who are stewards of our class I national parks, be involved in the Nation's plan to try to make the air quality better?

Ms. BOMAR. You mentioned, Senator, the strategic plan, the Department of the Interior's strategic plan, that it wasn't included. And I have not had an opportunity yet to be involved in that, but

if I am confirmed, I certainly look forward to working with you on that.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you.

Ms. BOMAR. It's a very important issue, Senator.

Senator ALEXANDER. And I would appreciate your mentioning this, if you are confirmed—which I hope you are—to the Secretary. It may just be an oversight, and it's one I'd like to see corrected.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Senator Alexander. And I can see, Ms. Mary Bomar, that there are no controversial issues that are ahead of you as park director.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. It's a so-called "smooth road," right? And you have done a very good job of not answering questions in advance of the time necessary. And if I wanted to wait for your confirmation until you had answered all these questions, I don't know how long we would be here.

Ms. BOMAR. That's right.

The CHAIRMAN. But you did a very good job of making sure we understand that you know they are bad problems, serious problems, right?

Ms. BOMAR. Yes, I do.

The CHAIRMAN. You've got about five of the biggest ones they've got in the Park Service proposed here by Senators today.

With that, the Senator from New Mexico will not give you any additional ones of that significance. I will merely say to you that there are, right in front of you now, many issues that must be resolved that have been put off. They won't be put off much longer. You will have to get on with a solution to a number of them that have been raised here this morning, no question about it.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. I want to tell you that I have confidence you will do that, and I hope that we can get you confirmed quickly so that you can have that opportunity to solve them and to show some of us that professionalism within the ranks is entitled to recognition. You will be the example of that, for you have been professional, par excellence, and now we're giving you a chance to run the Department. Good luck.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am honored to be nominated for this position. I work with some of the finest professionals in the National Park Service, and I look forward, if confirmed, to lead them. Thank you very much for the kindness.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. Bomar.

Now, we're finished asking you questions, but——

Senator WYDEN. This will be very brief.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand the distinguished Senator wants to ask a question.

Senator WYDEN. Very briefly, Ms. Bomar, to follow up on that other matter we talked about in the office. As I mentioned, Senator Smith and I have introduced legislation that's extraordinarily important in our part of the country, in the Pacific Northwest, for a Columbia Pacific National Heritage Area. This essentially would

build on this wonderful treasure we have on the Oregon coast, at Fort Clatsop. We even have folks, apparently, in the audience who have come solely to hear you expound on this. You can't possibly know the details of it. What I would simply like to ask, for purposes of this morning, is if you would hear those folks out and, when possible, when you come to the Pacific Northwest, we'd very much like you to have it on your schedule to visit the Oregon coast. We have a Lewis & Clark—actually, the previous legislation, Fort Clatsop National Memorial Expansion Act of 2001, we're continuing to build on that. That's what the heritage area is all about. And if we could have a hearing to discuss it with you, and have you all meet with our folks, that would be much appreciated.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you. As you know, Senator Wyden, we have the 27 heritage areas with us in the national parks that we work with, and 14 of them are in the northeast region. They do a wonderful job of telling the stories and connecting the communities together. So, good luck to you, and thank you for very much.

Senator WYDEN. We look forward to it.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

Senator WYDEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you say you had some people in the audience with reference—

Senator WYDEN. They are here expressly to make the case to folks at the Park Service about this treasure on the Oregon coast. I thank you for your courtesy to let me—

The CHAIRMAN. Will they stand up?

Senator WYDEN. That would be great. Can we get that extra visibility? There we are. Oregon and Washington rock.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, very good.

Senator WYDEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Delighted to let your ideas be known today, and for her to take cognizance of them.

And thank you for doing that for us, ma'am.

Ms. BOMAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. We stand in—oh, excuse me, Senator Thomas, from Wyoming, wants an additional comment.

Senator THOMAS. Yes, just a comment or two. I know that time is going.

One is the homeland security issue. In several of the parks, particularly in Arizona, down on the border, they're spending almost all their resources on taking care of the illegal crossing of the border.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Senator THOMAS. So, I think that's something that we really have to take a look at. And a good deal of that border is included in national parks.

Ms. BOMAR. National park boundary, that's right.

Senator THOMAS. So, it's a tough one. The other thing, of course, is we have 390 parks, but the park system is also responsible for some of the other kinds of facilities that we have, and I think the time has come when we have to start making a real evaluation as to what the role of the National Park Service is with regard to—some of these things are local facilities, and they want to help the

business in the village, so they'll come and want it to be a national historic site or whatever.

Senator BURNS. Yes, sir.

Senator THOMAS. And I just think we have to take a long look at that, or we're going to expand this park to beyond management areas. I think that's something.

And the other, of course, is, as in any agency, I think we have to really take a look at the efficiency of the management. We have to—we start making these plans, and it takes 3 years before they're implemented. Those kinds of things. I just hope that we can take a look at the inside operations.

Ms. BOMAR. Yes.

Senator THOMAS. Sure, you have to take a look at it, you have to do all the various things, but we need to make decisions a little more quickly than in 3 or 4 years.

So, these are just observations that I hope to work with you on.

Ms. BOMAR. I look forward to working with you. Thank you very much, Senator Thomas, for the kindness you've shown me.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. We stand in recess, subject to the call of the Chair. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 11 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

RESPONSES OF MARY A. BOMAR TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR DOMENICI

Question 1a. The National Park Service recently finalized its 2006 Management Policies after several months of internal review and public discussion.

How significant are these management policies to the daily operational issues that arise for superintendents and NPS employees?

Answer. They are very significant to the daily operational issues that arise because they: (1) document how we will implement the laws, Executive orders, and regulations that govern management of the national park system; (2) provide an authoritative source of guidance for resolving a broad range of issues that confront our employees daily; (3) provide a firm foundation for making sustainable decisions; (4) promote consistency and stability across the national park system; and (5) provide a basis for measuring the performance of superintendents and other NPS employees.

Question 1b. As a regional director, how did you involve the employees in your region in the review of the management policies?

Answer. As Regional Director of the Northeast Region, I actively solicited participation by our employees and park partners in commenting on the various drafts of the proposed management policies. Two senior Northeast regional employees, (a senior park superintendent and Associate Regional Director (ARD)) participated in two review and edit meetings in Washington and Denver to work on the development of the draft management policies. The ARD for Operations who participated in the revisions also conducted an informal "brown bag" lunch briefing for interested employees in the Philadelphia office. I directed all superintendents and ARDs to encourage their employees to send in their own comments to the ARD for Communications for forwarding to the Washington Office.

Question 2a. The 1916 Organic Act, which established the National Park Service, requires that the park lands be managed *in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations*. The recent publication of the management policies revealed a serious philosophical debate between those who believe in enhancing appropriate recreational opportunities in the park system and those who believe that preservation of the resource comes first and recreation comes second.

How do you envision reconciling this conflict among the system's strongest advocates?

Answer. The key area of disagreement is over the question of what is and what is not appropriate use of the parks. What we have needed is a better mechanism for finding an answer to that question. There is no quick and universal answer, in part because each park is different. Each park has its own purpose and significance; each park has its own unique resources; and each park has its own context or environment where those resources exist. As a result, decisions must be made on a park-by-park and case-by-case basis. While the 2006 Management Policies make clear that when there is a conflict, preservation is paramount, what is appropriate may vary from one park to another and from one location to another within a park. The only way to make reasonable decisions on these matters is through careful planning, analysis, and application of good professional judgment.

The 2006 Management Policies will give us improved tools for making these decisions. In particular, the policies provide better guidance on how to evaluate appropriate use, which is linked closely with better guidance on what constitutes unacceptable impacts. In addition, our policies now offer comprehensive guidance to superintendents as they apply their professional judgment in making decisions. That guidance requires that they take into account results of civic engagement and public involvement activities relating to decisions. This will not resolve all conflicts we en-

counter, but it will better ensure that our decisions are well-reasoned and that all voices are heard.

Question 2b. As regional director in the northeast, how did you sustain the visitor experience while ensuring that resources were preserved for the enjoyment of future generations?

Answer. The Northeast Region is the most urbanized region in the National Park System. Providing superlative visitor opportunities, while ensuring resource preservation, constitutes our daily work ethic, as it does in all regions and among all employees of the National Park Service. We are always guided by the mandates of the Organic Act which prescribes that we maintain these resources unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. In the Northeast, we actively involve our park partners and communities in achieving sustainable stewardship goals for our natural and cultural resources, and shared heritage.

At Independence National Historical Park, for example, many people wish to conduct events associated with Independence Hall or the Liberty Bell. At times these events may be appropriate, such as a number of events surrounding Independence Day, a natural time for visitors to enjoy the park resources and celebrate our nation. We manage the events according to a permit process that is common across the system, but allows for the individual site superintendent to make decisions based upon the unique attributes of the resource.

The same is true of visitation. There are tools in place for superintendents to decide the appropriate carrying capacities of resources in a specific park, such as the number of people who can be in Independence Hall, congruent with resource protection and visitor safety. If confirmed, I will continue to promote visitation and recreation that is in keeping with the preservation of parks resources.

Question 3. On August 25, 2006, the President issued a proclamation for the Department of the Interior to begin planning for the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016. The initiative is similar to that established by President Eisenhower in 1956 which led to an effort called Mission 66 for the 50th anniversary of the NPS in 1966. What is your vision for fulfilling the President's agenda for the National Park Service's 2016 Centennial?

Answer. Our present and future generations need to know that we as a country will protect our heritage and places that commemorate the historic events of America. The Centennial Challenge will allow us to develop a blueprint for the renewal of parks to better protect the parks, connect people to the parks and ensure the financial sustainability of the parks—because they are our heritage.

I believe the Centennial Challenge will give us a unique opportunity to connect all Americans and, for that matter, people from around the world, to our National Park System. The face of America has changed dramatically since Mission 66. Our ability to do a better job connecting National Parks to segments of our population who presently do not feel connected would be a great accomplishment. While we expect considerable interest by the philanthropic community to help fund certain projects, the key to the centennial is a combination of federal investment and private-sector contributions to focus the attention of ALL the American people on our great parks. We will need not only signature projects and celebratory events, but the absolute best visitor experience for all. This includes those who physically visit the parks as well as those who may do so virtually—via the internet, distance learning sessions in schools, or other electronic media.

Question 4. Significant homeland security and border security demands are being placed on the national parks and other public lands. You were superintendent of Independence, which is a park that has had enormous challenges related to homeland security. Would you please explain the nature of the security challenges—funding and otherwise—experienced by national park units, and how Congress might take some of the homeland security burden off the parks?

Answer. The NPS manages a number of formally designated icon sites such as the Statue of Liberty, Mt. Rushmore, Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, and the Washington Mall. We also have numerous sites along the southern and northern borders that are prone to law enforcement issues associated with illegal immigration and drug smuggling.

Our sites are visited by millions of domestic and international visitors each year. Each site has its own unique access, security, and operational issues, which are influenced by the viewpoints of the general public and local, state, and other federal entities. We are committed to striking the balance among adequate security, visitor access, and visitor enjoyment. We want our sites to be as safe as possible from terrorists' attacks while at the same time providing the public the freedom to enjoy their parks with as little intrusion as possible.

Congress can work with us to ensure adequate funding for staffing, resource deployment, and other law enforcement operations relating to support federal, state,

and other entities that are involved in homeland security. It also can continue to provide oversight of these issues and ensure it acts promptly when additional needs arise. I look forward to working closely with Congress on many of these issues to ensure the NPS is providing the best and most appropriate levels of security possible.

Question 5. As a career member of the National Park Service you have a unique and experienced perspective about the Park Service and the National Park System that not all appointed Directors have had. Based on your experience, what do you believe are the three greatest challenges facing the Park Service and the National Park System today?

Answer. I believe that three of the greatest challenges the National Park Service faces are:

- (1) Re-energizing the support of the American people for the National Parks and rejuvenating their pride in the "Best idea America ever had";
- (2) Improving the capabilities of the System for the 21st Century to meet the needs of a changing population; and
- (3) Recruiting, retaining, training, and preparing a new generation of leadership for the National Park Service.

Question 6. Ms. Bomar, as you are aware, Bandelier National Monument is the most visited National Park site in northern New Mexico with over 230,000 visitors per year. Because of its cultural resources, rich history and scenic beauty, the park is truly a national treasure and one of our New Mexico treasures.

Construction to renovate the Visitor's Center at Bandelier was originally scheduled to begin in 2004, but is now not scheduled to begin until 2008 or 2009. Year after year we have seen recurrent delay.

The visitor center was built during the late 1930's, and it's in desperate need of repair. It's the only public facility at the park and I know that local community leaders, state officials, and area Pueblos have been working hard along with the dedicated Bandelier Park staff.

Will you pledge to monitor the planning progress of the Bandelier Visitors Center and make its ultimate completion a priority?

Answer. The renovation of the Bandelier National Monument Visitor Center is included in the NPS's 5-year plan for line-item construction. It is my understanding that due to changes in the prioritization of projects within that program, the Bandelier project is now scheduled for construction in FY 2009, rather than FY 2007.

I also understand the park superintendent has taken steps to improve visitors' experiences at the park while we wait for construction to begin on the visitor center. Among those improvements is the production of a new, high-definition film highlighting the park and arranging for expanded park exhibits in other community spaces.

Senator Domenici, I have wonderful memories of Bandelier National Monument from visits during my tenure with the old Santa Fe Region. I agree that this is truly a national treasure. I fully recognize the importance of this project to the park and the surrounding community, and pledge to work to see this project through in a timely manner.

Question 7. As you know I am a strong supporter of renewable energy projects. I firmly believe that increased use of renewables is important as we search for solutions to energy security and climate change challenges. I have recently been made aware of a proposed renewables project in the mountains of Western Maine, the Redington Wind Farm that the National Park Service has formally opposed based apparently on the project's proximity to the Appalachian Trail. I would like to know if the National Park Service consulted with other agencies including the Department of Energy when it issued its formal opposition to the project before the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission earlier this year. If the NPS did not consult with other agencies, I would like to know if this is standard operating procedure and if, in your opinion, Executive Order 13212 (issued May 18, 2001) regarding energy-related project applies to this situation?

Answer. The National Park Service supports and promotes the concept of sustainability including the development of renewable energy. In the case of the Redington Wind Farm project, it is my understanding that the NPS was asked to comment on the impact of the project on the Appalachian Trail during a state review process in which the NPS was one of many parties providing information to the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission. The hearing was intended to aid in their deliberations about whether or not to grant an exception to their existing zoning to provide for the proposed Redington Wind Farm. In preparing for the hearing, NPS did not consult with the Department of Energy in this particular case, nor would it be standard operating procedure to do so, given that NPS was merely participating in the state

process as one of a number of “expert witnesses” to discuss potential impacts on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, a federally protected resource.

RESPONSES OF MARY A. BOMAR TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR THOMAS

Question 8a. I understand you have served the Park Service in parks all across our great country. Obviously, each Park Service region is unique and has its own challenges.

What experience do you have with issues in Western parks, such as those in my home state of Wyoming?

Answer. Twelve of the 16 years I have spent with the National Park Service were in the West working for the old Southwest Santa Fe Regional Office; the Intermountain Regional Office in Denver; and in a range of parks as a management “trouble-shooter.” While I did not spend time at parks in Wyoming, I gained experience in addressing a broad range of issues that are common to many western parks, such as wilderness management, conflicting uses, livestock problems, invasive species, water use, access, inholdings, and more.

Question 8b. When do you plan to travel to the Wyoming parks and other parks throughout the West?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to accept the invitation to attend and speak at the Wyoming Business Alliance/Wyoming Heritage Foundation meeting in Casper on November 16 and 17. If time permits, I will visit one or more Wyoming parks while I am there. I hope the trip will be the first of many opportunities to visit western parks.

Question 9. As a career member of the National Park Service you have a perspective on the Park Service not all appointed directors have had. Based on your experience, what are the greatest challenges facing the Park Service today?

Answer. I believe that three of the greatest challenges the National Park Service faces are:

- (1) Re-energizing the support of the American people for the National Parks and rejuvenating their pride in the best idea America ever had;
- (2) Improving the capabilities of the System for the 21st Century to meet the needs of a changing population; and
- (3) Recruiting, retaining, training, and preparing a new generation of leadership for the National Park Service.

Question 10a. The Park Service has made great strides in improving efficiency and accountability with programs such as Core Operations, the Parks’ Scorecard, the Business Plan Initiative and the Office of Management and Budget’s PART review.

How would you continue to build on this positive progress?

Answer. I agree with you that the Service has made significant strides related to improving our efficiency and accountability. I directed the parks in the Northeast Region to adopt each of these new business practices and embrace the principles of accountability that they prescribe. I have produced and implemented the first business plan for a regional office to demonstrate my commitment to sound management and planning. In addition, I was the lead among NPS Directors in developing a business plan for Interpretation and Education—the first business plan for a NPS program area. I will continue to place high priority on these processes with the goal of improving financial management decisions at all levels of the organization. I have already seen the benefits of each of these initiatives. The park managers in my region who have completed a business plan are better informed about their financial conditions and options for now and for the future. As an added benefit, the Service has been able to hire many of the business students that consulted in the preparation of the plans. We are going to need more of the kind of skills and thinking that these people possess as we continue to build on these successes.

Question 10b. How can the Park Service utilize the private sector to assist in meeting their financial needs without commercializing our national treasures?

Answer. The Service has established clear guidelines regarding philanthropic recognition as well as the standards that must be met when engaging with partners. As a member of the National Leadership Council, I endorsed these guidelines. In my region, and throughout the Service, we have successfully completed many large-scale partnership projects without compromising our mission or commercializing our parks. We will continue to do so under my leadership.

Question 11a. For several years Congress has been trying to address a seemingly endless maintenance backlog.

How do you intend to tackle this challenge?

Answer. My approach is three-pronged: (1) continue to be creative using available repair, rehabilitation, line item construction, and fee program funding to improve known problems as we have been doing over the past six years; (2) continue an aggressive preventative maintenance program so that we do not slip into a significant backlog in the future; and (3) continue the NPS's transformation in the way assets are managed through new business practices, with a greater emphasis on preventative maintenance and lifecycle costs. The National Park Service has completed a systematic, exhaustive inventory of our assets so that we know exactly what we have, their location, and the priority of individual assets to accomplish the park's mission. NPS is in the process of completing comprehensive condition assessments to gain a better understanding of the current conditions of the standard asset types found in most parks (buildings, houses, roads, utilities, etc.). Preliminary facility condition index information for these industry standard asset types has been developed, and NPS has the capacity to compare it across asset type, by park, within a region, and nationally. NPS is also gathering information about "critical components" within an individual asset. For example, in a building, it is more important that the roof and foundation be in better condition than interior finishes. Having this information will help NPS to prioritize allocation of its resources during the budget process, and will help parks make more informed decisions about the costs of sustaining their assets.

Question 11b. How will you measure your progress?

Answer. Progress is being measured through the facility condition index (FCI), which helps our managers understand the relative condition of assets within a portfolio. The range of acceptable FCI varies by asset type. Appropriate improvement targets will be set accordingly. The NPS also has established an asset priority index that allows managers to identify mission-critical assets and to target maintenance dollars toward them.

Question 12. Speaking of seemingly endless, I am sure you are aware of that many park management plans go on for many years before a record of decision is issued. This leaves park managers and visitors with a great deal of uncertainty for an extended amount of time.

How would you help ensure that park management plans reach a timely conclusion?

Answer. The National Park Service has recently adopted a policy that when management plans are determined to have no public controversy and no significant environmental impacts, environmental assessments will be prepared rather than the standard draft and final environmental impact statements. I support this policy, which can reduce the time by as much as one year to complete the plans and save significant funds. The new Management Policies delegate to regional directors, with consultation by the Chief, Environmental Quality, the authority to approve this waiver. In addition, I believe we need to look at the time that it takes for administrative review by the bureau and Department. This time could be expedited by encouraging concurrent reviews.

Question 13a. As you know, I have joined with Secretary Kempthorne in launching the National Park Centennial Challenge, an aggressive 10-year initiative to significantly improve park resources for the 100th anniversary of the Park Service.

What does this challenge mean to you?

Answer. In 10 years, the National Park Service will be 100 years old. I believe we should view the years approaching the Centennial as a time to take steps to ensure that the parks will continue to be the guardians of our nation's heritage for the next 100 years. There is an untapped opportunity to make the national parks better, more accessible, and more relevant. With care and a significant federal investment, married up with philanthropic donations the parks have the capacity to be the source of a national opportunity for education, recreation, art, science, and economic growth.

Question 13b. What is your vision for the future of the parks, for the next ten years and beyond?

Answer. Our present and future generations will agree that we as a country will protect our heritage and places that commemorate the events of past and future America. My vision for the next ten years and beyond is to connect every American to the parks and ensure the financial sustainability of the parks. If we are to continue to preserve and enjoy these parks, we must care for them and help each American value them because they are our heritage.

Question 13c. If Congress increases Park Service appropriations in the coming years, how will you ensure that park managers will continue using creative and efficient techniques in order to get the most bang for their buck.

Answer. Systematic evaluation of park needs through the core operations analysis and parks scorecard will ensure that the fundamental visitor, natural, cultural,

maintenance, line item construction (permanent infrastructure) and operational needs of the service are met. This will also provide for 21st century leadership training that will allow for more efficient, effective, and responsive management and partnership capabilities.

Question 14a. The Organic Act of 1916, which established the National Park Service, clearly states that visitor enjoyment is a primary mission of the Park Service.

What are your views on the role of tourism and recreation in the NPS mission?

Answer. The first NPS Director, Stephen T. Mather, laid out a strategic vision for visitor enjoyment that included providing for visitor comfort, education, and inspiration. As a park Superintendent and Regional Director I have gained valuable insight into tourism's relationship to the NPS mission while conducting numerous civic engagement exercises with members of the tourism community. I have also served on Governor Rendell's Tourism Partnership Advisory Board while superintendent of Independence National Historical Park—a position I continued as Regional Director.

NPS Management Policies contain a new section on tourism which states that, "The Service will support and promote appropriate visitor use through cooperation and coordination with the tourism industry." If confirmed as Director, I intend to uphold these policies of dialog and outreach with our tourism partners as well as encourage environmental leadership by the Service and the tourism industry.

Question 14b. How do you feel about snowmobiles in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks? Would you ever support a ban on their use?

Answer. I understand that these parks are currently operating under an interim winter use plan that provides a balanced approach to winter access with an appropriate mix of snowcoach, wheeled vehicle, non-motorized, and snowmobile use in the parks. With regard to snowmobiles, we have seen over the past two winters that they may be operated without unacceptable impacts to park resources and visitors through the use of best available technology requirements, limits on the number of snowmobiles that may enter the parks each day, guiding requirements, and other reasonable restrictions.

A new winter use plan and environmental impact statement (EIS) is underway for Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway. The draft EIS and a proposed rule will be released for public review and comment during winter 2006-2007. I look forward to being a part of this important process.

Question 15. Currently, Dean Reeder, the National Tourism Director for the National Park Service has no funding to promote tourism or to address visitation numbers.

Would you adequately fund his operation?

Answer. The National Tourism Office (NTO) is within our Partnerships, Interpretation, Education, and Outdoor Recreation Associate ship. The NTO is charged with developing, in concert with our regional offices and park managers, a long-range strategic plan for tourism development.

I think it is important to keep park and regional personnel involved in tourism development as they contribute immensely and want to be involved. I was closely involved with tourism organizations as superintendent of Independence NHP, and encouraged close cooperation with tourism organizations while Northeast Regional Director, such as an excellent partnership with NYC& Company, the New York City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The Centennial Challenge will provide an excellent opportunity to highlight and promote park visitation and to target and invite members of our underserved populations. It will also give us a great chance to work with our tourism partners and gateway communities by engaging the public directly and inviting families and citizens of all ages to celebrate the National Park ideal. The American public, by renewing their acquaintance with national parks, will be participating in the dialog to envision our next century of parks, and the enjoyment of the same.

Question 16. Permitted outfitters and guides, both commercial entities and non-profit organizations, are a critical component of local communities and provide park access and enjoyment for a broad spectrum of visitors. Most outfitters are authorized under the Incidental Business Permit, which is now being converted to the new Commercial Use Authorization.

How will the NPS work with outfitters to ensure a stable business environment under the new Commercial Use Authorization?

Answer. It is my understanding that the National Park Service has actively worked with outfitter and guide groups to ensure they have a voice in the development of new policies implementing commercial use authorizations (CUA). The NPS Concession Advisory Board established a working group charged with developing CUA guidelines, and this group included representatives from both commercial and non-profit entities. The group helped to formulate the policies that are now in the

interim CUA guidance. The NPS has also actively sought the input from these groups in public meetings and will continue to work closely with them to address their concerns.

Question 17a. The 1998 Concessions Act prohibits “fee-bidding”—the award of concessions contracts based simply on the highest fee to be paid to the U.S. Recently, however, NPS has been engaging in de facto fee bidding by routinely declaring that offers are “tied” on selection factors involving visitor services and resource conservation and breaking the “tie” by selecting the offer with the highest fee.

Do you believe this practice is consistent with the letter and the spirit of the 1998 Concessions Act?

Answer. The NPS evaluates offers based on the criteria outlined in the 1998 Concessions Act. I am aware that there is a concern that the fee is the deciding factor. However, I understand it is rare for two offers to be so close in their scores that the franchise fee offered is the deciding factor. The NPS believes quality visitor services, protection of the resource, and operational ability of the concessionaire are the most important evaluation factors for concession operations.

Question 17b. Do you agree that the primary purpose of the concessions program is to provide quality service to Park visitors rather than maximize revenue to NPS?

Answer. Absolutely. As I stated above, quality visitor service, protection of the resource and operational expertise are the most important factors to the NPS in the concession program.

Question 18a. During the last few years the National Park Service has been competing concessions contracts, such as Hamilton Stores at Yellowstone National Park, which involve a large amount of possessory interest. The exact value of the possessory interest has been contested after contract award and the new concessioner and NPS have had to modify the terms of the contract.

As superintendent and regional director, what have you done to minimize the impact of possessory interest on contracts?

Answer. I believe it is beneficial for the NPS and the concessioner to negotiate the value of the possessory interest prior to the release of the prospectus for a new contract. This allows the NPS to issue prospectuses with a set value for possessory interest, eliminating the uncertainty for offerors and the NPS. Additionally, the Northeast Region has, whenever possible, utilized franchise fees to undertake investments for capital improvement projects. This use of franchise fees eliminates additional possessory interest.

Question 18b. How would you change the contract selection process to minimize the impact of possessory interest?

Answer. As I stated above, negotiating the value of possessory interest prior to the release of a prospectus is beneficial to both the NPS and concessioners. If confirmed as Director, I would encourage this practice.

Question 19. As I am sure you know, the Park Service owes Congress a progress report on the new concessions law this year.

How will you ensure that the report is a fair and accurate assessment of NPS programs in conjunction with the new law?

Answer. The NPS sought input for the report from the concession community, and used the information gathered from concessioners, private sector consultants such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, and internal program experts to compile the report. The report, which is in the final stages of development, will reflect this input, and provides the analysis requested in the 1998 Concession Act.

Question 20. In the West, and across the nation, our national parks are often bordered by gateway communities. It is critical to maintain good communication and cooperation between parks and local communities.

What steps would you take to ensure the Park Service continues to cultivate good relationships with gateway communities?

Answer. I personally feel strongly about the importance of cultivating good relationships with gateway communities. During my tenure at Independence National Historical Park, I created a full-time partnership position and full-time volunteer coordinator who worked very closely with the park Special Use Coordinator to ensure we worked with the parks eighty known partnerships and community groups. Along with my staff, I attended regular park update meetings with many of our gateway community groups. Annually we held a park open house day for our community and partners to thank them for their support and give them an update of park projects, future events and general park operations.

It is also the stated policy of the NPS. In the recently released 2006 NPS Management Policies, Section 1.7 speaks to the importance of civic engagement with gateway communities, which is to be “. . . viewed as a commitment to building and sustaining relationships with neighbors and other communities of interest . . . Park and program managers will seek opportunities to work in partnership with all inter-

ested parties to jointly sponsor, develop and promote public involvement activities and thereby improve mutual understanding, decisions and work products. Through these efforts the Service will also learn from the communities it serves, including gateway communities.” If confirmed, I will continue to support this policy and work to ensure that park and program managers do likewise.

Question 21a. As you know, the State of Wyoming and the Department of the Interior are at odds over the management and delisting of wolves. Wolves are recovered and should be delisted. The National Park Service played a major role in initially bringing Canadian wolves to Wyoming and will be responsible for managing wolves within the parks.

What do you believe can be done to resolve the current dispute?

Answer. It is my understanding that Idaho and Montana have U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-approved wolf management plans and management of wolves has been transferred to them.

The NPS continues to facilitate gray wolf recovery at Yellowstone National Park and collaborate, as warranted, with the USFWS to support the Northern Rocky Mountains gray wolf recovery program.

I understand that in 2004, the NPS Intermountain Regional Director and the Director of Wyoming Game and Fish signed a Memorandum of Understanding to share information on wolves that would assist in meeting the missions of both agencies. Building on that MOU, the Superintendent of Yellowstone and the Wyoming Director have also signed an agreement to cooperatively monitor wolves and their natural prey. It is my belief that the continued collaboration between all affected agencies is the only way to resolve this situation. I pledge my support to this continuing collaborative process.

Question 21b. Please explain your views on how wolves should be managed within the parks to avoid damage to wildlife and landowners outside the parks?

Answer. I understand that in order to facilitate monitoring and research, all of the wolves brought from Canada were radio-collared before release. Park staff currently maintains radio collars on up to half of the wolves in the population allowing Wolf Project staff members to monitor the population.

The special rules established by the USFWS for restoration of the “nonessential experimental” population contain provisions for addressing the possibility of conflicts with livestock. I understand there is also currently a plan that seeks to compensate livestock owners for the value of lost livestock.

Question 22a. As you know, brucellosis has been eradicated from the State of Wyoming except within wildlife populations within Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. While the state recently regained its brucellosis-free status, the presence of the disease in bison and elk populations within the Parks is still problematic.

Do you believe eradicating brucellosis should be a priority for the Park Service?

Answer. The National Park Service is collaborating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming to maintain wild and free-ranging populations of elk and bison in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA), and to work together to continue long-term planning processes for the eventual elimination of brucellosis from GYA bison and elk.

The development of more effective vaccines, more effective vaccine delivery techniques for free-ranging wildlife, and better diagnostic techniques for identifying infection in live animals are priority research and development needs. Systematic vaccination of elk and bison will, over the long-term, reduce disease prevalence in elk and bison populations, especially if vaccine technology and methods for remote vaccine delivery to free-ranging wildlife are improved.

Question 22b. If so, what will the Park Service do to eradicate brucellosis?

Answer. Yellowstone National Park is working on a draft Environmental Impact Statement to assess the effects and determine the feasibility of vaccinating bison in the park against brucellosis by using a remote delivery system. A remote delivery system consists of a method to vaccinate the animals without capture or direct contact between humans and animals.

The Greater Yellowstone Interagency Brucellosis Committee, composed of state and federal employees, meets regularly to share information and coordinate research needs and results. Its objectives are diverse, but include protecting biologically viable elk and bison populations, preserving state and federal jurisdiction for management of wildlife and livestock, and a commitment to basing brucellosis-related management recommendations on factual information. Recognizing the economic interests of the livestock industry is an important factor in addressing this issue.

Question 23. Homeland security activities take a significant toll on our national parks and their staff. I offered an amendment to the immigration bill this year to

help protect our federal land borders and natural resources. How would you characterize the homeland security and border security demands that are being placed on many border and icon parks?

Answer. The NPS manages a number of formally designated icon sites such as the Statue of Liberty, Mt. Rushmore, Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, and the Washington Mall. We also have numerous sites along the southern and northern borders that are prone to law enforcement issues associated with illegal immigration and drug smuggling.

Our sites are visited by millions of domestic and international visitors each year. Each site has its own unique access, security, and operational issues, which are influenced by the viewpoints of the general public and local, state, and other federal entities. We are committed to striking the balance among adequate security, visitor access, and visitor enjoyment. We want our sites to be as safe as possible from terrorists' attacks while at the same time providing the public the freedom to enjoy their parks with as little intrusion as possible.

There have been additional responsibilities placed on our staffs at icon and border parks. We have worked diligently to balance increased staffing and overall security infrastructure and maintaining the levels of service we provide in other areas.

Congress can work with us to ensure adequate funding for staffing, resource deployment, and other law enforcement operations relating to support federal, state, and other entities that are involved in homeland security. It also can continue to provide oversight of these issues and ensure it acts promptly when additional needs arise. I look forward to working closely with Congress on many of these issues to ensure the NPS is providing the best and most appropriate level of security possible.

RESPONSES OF MARY A. BOMAR TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR MARTINEZ

Question 24. Ms. Bomar, you have most recently served as the Director of the National Park's Northeast Region, which faces many geographic challenges as well as large, urban interface areas. As you know, Everglades National Park is in close proximity to the Miami-Dade metro area as well as Biscayne National Park. How has your previous experience prepared you to help oversee the management of parks in such diverse places?

Answer. As the Northeast Regional Director, I routinely responded to the challenges of managing parks within an urban environment by applying innovative and creative management solutions along with civic engagement which produced successful results. I have visited the Everglades and know firsthand that this is truly a one-of-a-kind national treasure that has a complex set of challenges involving many competing interests. I am confident that my overall experience in the National Park Service, especially in bringing together diverse competing interests to develop mutually acceptable solutions, will serve me well to resolve similar South Florida park interface challenges in the Miami-Dade metro area.

Question 25. Last Spring, I visited Everglades National Park, Big Cypress National Preserve, and Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Reserve. I am looking forward to getting you down there to tour this amazing part of Florida. As you know, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) is the most ambitious public works project in our nation's history and our most challenging. Should you be confirmed, will you continue the commitment and prioritization at NPS with restoring the Everglades to its historic sheet flow?

Answer. Thank you for the invitation to tour South Florida Parks with you. It would be my pleasure to do so, should I be confirmed. Yes, I will continue to support the objectives of the CERP, and I applaud your efforts in this regard. I look forward to continuing the progress made with the State of Florida in restoring historic sheet flows to Everglades National Park.

Question 26. Ms. Bomar, you mentioned the upcoming Centennial Challenge introduced by President Bush and Secretary Kempthorne to prepare the National Park Service for its upcoming 100th anniversary in 2016. What sort of investment do we need to make in our parks to make this initiative a reality to restore our national gems?

Answer. We need to make a commitment to fulfill the goals of the Challenge to match federal funds, philanthropy, and volunteerism to stride boldly into the next 100 years of National Parks. The President challenged the citizens of the Nation to join us in this initiative, matching federal investments with philanthropic gifts, culminating in the centennial celebration of the National Park Service in 2016. With our continued care and enhanced investments, the parks have the capacity to be the source of a national opportunity for education, recreation, art, science, and economic growth.

Question 27. Do you feel the NPS has enough resources to effectively manage all our parks, conduct routine maintenance, and hire and retain staff? If not, what would you recommend from a budgetary standpoint to improve the mission of the Park System.

Answer. As a result of Congress's strong support, record levels of funds are being invested to staff and improve our parks, and significant investments are being made in the maintenance of park facilities and roads, and in monitoring and protection of the park natural resources. We are also working smarter by employing a number of innovative management approaches to identify management improvements and efficiencies that will result in improved visitor services and more cost-effective operations.

NPS reached its 90th anniversary in August. If confirmed, I plan to carry out President Bush's vision to ensure that the NPS budget will "further enhance the national parks during the decade leading up to the 2016 centennial celebration." (President Bush, August 25, 2006). As I stated at my confirmation hearing, I will be a strong advocate for funding and support of our parks. I look forward to working with the Congress to make the President's vision a reality.

Question 28. Our national parks are true national treasures for all to enjoy. What is your philosophy on access of NPS land for recreational enjoyment for the public?

Answer. I concur fully with our Management Policies that national parks belong to everyone, and we welcome everyone to experience their parks. The policies go on to say that we also welcome international visitors, in keeping with our commitment to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout the world. The condition we attach to this open invitation is that the forms of recreation that people wish to pursue must be appropriate to the parks and not cause impairment or unacceptable impacts to the parks' resources. This will ensure that future generations can enjoy the parks in a condition that is as good as, or better than, the conditions that exist today.

Question 29a. In Florida, at Biscayne National Park, a Clinton era NPS rule is still being used that prohibits personal watercraft (PWC) vessels from entering the park while allowing recreational boating and commercial vessels to operate in the park.

Will you support open access of our parks?

Answer. Enjoyment of our parks is part of the mission of the National Park Service. However, I believe that not all uses are appropriate for all parks.

Question 29b. Will you support public comment being offered before closing off access like the Clinton Administration policy for PWCs?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the NPS solicits public comments when it makes future decisions that have significant impacts on the public and its enjoyment of the parks.

Question 30. It is my understanding that no Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment was ever performed at Biscayne National Park to warrant the prohibition of PWCs, do you know why no such environmental review was performed?

Answer. I understand that the regulation was adopted after a notice and comment rulemaking in which over 20,000 comments were received regarding PWC use through the National Park System, including Biscayne National Park. I also understand that, at that time, it was determined by the NPS that the rulemaking would maintain the quality of the human environment, health, and safety, and therefore a categorical exclusion under the NEPA regulations was appropriate for the regulation.

RESPONSE OF MARY A. BOMAR TO QUESTION FROM SENATOR DORGAN

Question 31. So my question to you, Ms. Bomar, is what kind of a strategy do you intend to bring to the budget process? What areas of the budget do you think we need to cut and are there areas where you think we should be doing more?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to carry out President Bush's vision, expressed on the National Park Service's 90th Anniversary in August, to ensure that the budget will "further enhance the national parks during the decade leading up to the 2016 centennial celebration." As I stated during my confirmation hearing, I will be an advocate for funding and support of our parks. But I also understand the need to be effective and efficient, practices I stressed as a regional director. I plan to use innovative evaluation tools within the NPS, such as the Core Operations Analysis and the Park Scorecard, to determine appropriate resources and effectively allocate those resources to achieve the strategic goals of the National Park Service. We will also need a strong philanthropic commitment to meet the needs of the National Park Service as well.

I am committed to working with you in developing budgetary strategies to deal with other issues that have a direct impact on our ability to appropriately staff park operations and maintain resources, such as escalating utility costs.

RESPONSES OF MARY A. BOMAR TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CANTWELL

Question 32. Please describe how Senate Bill 781, the Right-to-Ride Livestock on Federal Land Act of 2005, would affect or change current Park Service land management practices or relevant decision-making. Does the Park Service have any particular policy regarding the use of pack and saddle stock animals? Please describe any instances in the last 5 years where trail accessibility was changed specifically for pack and saddle stock animals anywhere in U.S. Forest Service lands. If there are instances, please explain the justification for closing these trails.

Answer. From what I understand, S. 781 would have little impact on current NPS management practices because the bill requires land management agencies to comply with NEPA before closing trails permanently, which NPS already does. While we recognize that use of pack and saddle stock animals is an important activity that park visitors enjoy, NPS does not have an overall policy applicable to this activity; this use is largely determined on a park-by-park basis. I am not personally aware of any instances in the last 5 years where trail accessibility was changed specifically for pack and saddle stock animals on any Federal lands. However, if confirmed, I would be willing to look into this matter further and work with members of Congress who have concerns in this area.

Question 33. I understand the Forest Service is currently updating their National Trail Classification System, a process that will set design and maintenance parameters for new and existing trails on National Forest Lands. Will this reclassification process affect the National Parks Service's existing trail classification system?

Answer. My understanding is that the proposed revisions to the Forest Service nationwide trail classification system involves all trails on national forest lands, not just National Trails, but does not affect other agencies. There appears to be no reason why this Forest Service action would have any affect on how the National Park Service classifies its trails.

Question 34. How would the major budget cuts proposed in the President's FY07 Budget request for the NPS affect trail maintenance in the National Park System? Will your budget allow you to maintain trails to current standards, and if not, how will the Service prioritize which trails are to be maintained?

Answer. It is my understanding that trail maintenance is historically funded from park base operational funding and cyclic maintenance. There is no reduction in park base operational funding in the President's 2007 request, and there is a \$10 million increase for cyclic maintenance in the President's 2007 request.

Question 35. Please describe in detail how the budget decrease proposed in the President's FY07 budget request for the NPS would affect each National Park Service unit in Washington state.

Answer. Park base operational funding for all nine parks in Washington State is increased in the President's 2007 request. In addition, the President's 2007 request for line-item construction includes \$27.9 million for projects in Washington State. This would follow the \$26.8 million for line-item construction projects in Washington State that Congress appropriated for FY 2006.

Question 36. As you may know, Mount St. Helens in southwest Washington is currently a National Volcanic Monument managed by the Forest Service. I have been approached by some of my constituents who advocate that it should be made a National Park. Could you please tell me what additional resources DOI would bring to Mount Saint Helens as a National Park that are not currently provided by the Forest Service as it managed as a National Monument?

Answer. If the National Park Service were given responsibility for management of Mt. St. Helens, it would be managed in a manner similar to all of the other 390 units of the National Park System. However, it is premature to comment on what resources would be available or other actions that would be taken should such a management change be directed by Congress. Interior has a process for examining the suitability of areas for designation by Congress as a park unit and, if directed by Congress, this process would be used to examine Mount St. Helens.

Question 37. Originally the National Park Service supported establishment of the Ice Age Flood Trail as encompassed in S. 206 which passed the Senate in November 2005. At a recent hearing on the bill on the House side, the Park Service reversed their opinion and opposed the bill. The proposal enjoys wide, bipartisan support. If you are confirmed as the new director of the NPS, would you be open to reconsidering the Park Service's public stance on this proposal?

Answer. I am aware of the strong support among the Pacific Northwest congressional delegation for the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail proposal. The National Park Service conducted a study on Ice Age Floods and recommended, as the preferred alternative, the establishment of a National Geologic Trail—an auto route through areas that have prominent flood features. The Department has opposed the legislation in its current form and urged a less costly alternative—expanding on the interpretation that is already being done at Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area. If legislation to establish this trail does not pass during the 109th Congress and is reintroduced next Congress, the Department will review its position on the legislation, and I will be part of that process.

Question 38. As you know, Secretary Kempthorne recently announced a “Centennial Challenge” for the National Parks. In the past, the NPS has been criticized for failing to follow through on promises related to the parks, in particular President Bush’s 2000 campaign promise to eliminate the NPS maintenance backlog. Please describe how you plan to implement this initiative and what you believe it could mean for our nation’s parks. How would you respond to critics that do not believe, based on the Administration’s record to date, that help for the parks might be forthcoming?

Answer. I plan to follow through with the Administration’s commitment to recognize the national parks for the next century, including producing a blueprint for philanthropic, public-private ventures by May 2007 as requested by the President. As I stated at my confirmation hearing, I will be a strong advocate for funding and support of our parks. Through the Centennial Challenge, I will:

- coordinate with interested groups;
- recommend goals and the overall framework for the planning and execution of the Centennial Challenge;
- highlight signature projects of the Centennial Challenge; and
- engage and educate partners and the public on how to get involved in the Centennial Challenge.

Question 39. Senator Murray and I recently introduced S. 3905, which would include the Eaglesdale ferry dock site on Bainbridge Island, Washington in the Minidoka Internment National Monument. Such designation was recommended in May 2006 in a report issued by the Department of Interior. If nominated as director of the Parks Service, would you be supportive of this legislation?

Answer. I understand that the House Subcommittee on National Parks will have a hearing on the House companion to S. 3905 on September 28 as the first step in considering legislation to implement this part of the General Management Plan and the National Park Service’s Special Resource Study. While the Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation, I am aware that the recently-completed General Management Plan, as well as the Special Resource Study, supported the inclusion of this site in Minidoka Internment National Monument.

Last month, I had the great pleasure of visiting Bainbridge Island and Olympic National Park while attending a National Leadership Council meeting. I truly enjoyed driving the rustic, charming, quiet country roads on this magnificent island. I look forward to working with you in the future and learning more about this very powerful story.

Question 40. Do you support H.R. 5732, which would direct the Secretary of Interior to continue stocking fish in certain lakes in North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area? Please describe any specific concerns you may have, or why it is supported by the NPS.

Answer. The National Park Service and the State of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife are in agreement with all elements of the Mountain Lakes Fisheries Management Plan. A 12-year study, resulting in the plan, applies the best available science and provides for the removal of fish in some lakes and continued stocking in others. I understand the Administration has not yet developed its position on H.R. 5732. If confirmed, I will carefully review the plan and consider whether H.R. 5732 will assist with the plan’s implementation and is consistent with NPS priorities.

Question 41. In the President’s 2006 budget request, the Administration supported land acquisition for the newly created Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. However, this year’s budget request did not ask for any additional funds needed to finish this landmark park. Please explain that decision, and will you commit to requesting appropriations in FY08 that will allow this Park to be completed?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department’s 2007 request for land acquisition required difficult choices among many worthy priorities. As we develop the 2008 budget for land acquisition, I will commit to considering the merits of the

Lewis and Clark NHP acquisition as we set our priorities and determine the specific acquisitions to request in the budget.

Question 42. Are there currently any plans to drill for oil and gas or allow mining within 20 miles of any U.S. National Park?

Answer. I understand that there are places relatively close to national parks where oil and gas activity has been proposed. One of the challenges of managing the national parks is recognizing that there are many development uses going on outside of our boundaries and, sometimes, inside the boundaries on private lands where valid existing rights exist. The National Park Service works with its neighbors, be they other federal agencies, state or local entities, or private parties, to try to ensure minimal impact from that development on park resources.

The recently-adopted Management Policies addresses the subject of adverse impacts outside of park boundaries in Section 1.6, which recognizes that protecting park resources requires managers to address threats that occur outside park boundaries and states that “[t]he Service will use all available tools to protect park resources and values from unacceptable impacts.”

RESPONSES OF MARY A. BOMAR TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR SALAZAR

Question 43. In 2000, the President promised to provide enough funding over five years to eliminate Park Service's maintenance backlog, which was estimated at the time to be \$4.9 billion. It is now five years since that commitment and I am hearing estimates that place the NPS maintenance backlog somewhere between \$4.5 billion to \$9.69 billion. That is to say that the maintenance backlog at the Parks seems to have increased over the past five years. What steps are you going to take, either through added funding or other means, to reduce the maintenance backlog?

Answer. With funds provided over the past five years, the National Park Service has undertaken thousands of facility improvements, resulting in improved roads and trails, rehabilitated visitor centers, more accessible campgrounds, stabilized historic structures, and high visitor satisfaction rates. The Service has also transformed its management approach to facilities through new business practices, with a greater emphasis on preventative maintenance and lifecycle costs. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts.

The National Park Service has completed a systematic, exhaustive inventory of our assets so that we know exactly what we have, their location, and the priority of individual assets to accomplish the park's mission. NPS is in the process of completing comprehensive condition assessments to gain a better understanding of the current conditions of the standard asset types found in most parks (buildings, houses, roads, utilities, etc.). Preliminary facility condition index information for these industry standard asset types has been developed, and NPS has the capacity to compare it across asset type, by park, within a region, and nationally. NPS is also gathering information about “critical components” within an individual asset. For example, in a building, it is more important for the roof and foundation condition to be in better condition than interior finishes. Having this information will help NPS to prioritize allocation of its resources, and will help parks make more informed decisions about the costs of sustaining their assets.

Question 44. If nominated, will you agree to conduct a complete survey of the maintenance backlog at the Parks and share that with Congress?

Answer. Over the past several years, the National Park Service has conducted an intensive assessment of the condition of eight industry-standard assets (buildings, overnight campsites, trails, unpaved roads, paved roads, employee housing, water treatment systems, and waste water treatment systems), providing information that it has never had before, including systematic information about its inventory, its value, its condition, and requirements for sustaining the assets. All parks have completed preliminary condition assessments, and we are on track to have comprehensive condition assessments completed by the end of FY 2006. The next step, which we are beginning now, is to develop servicewide assessment, inventory, and valuation techniques for the non-industry standard asset types (monuments, ruins, fortifications, railroads, amphitheatres, etc.), which comprise nearly 30 percent of the total NPS asset inventory.

If confirmed, I will be pleased to share the results of our assessments with Congress.

Question 45. For the past year I and several of my colleagues have been paying close attention to the rewriting the National Park Service management policies. I was extremely pleased that the final copy of policies signed last month restored the 90-year-old management principle to “First, do no harm,” and abandoned earlier efforts to institute a less protective approach to park management. This rewrite of the management policies, which I am not convinced was necessary in the first place,

took a tremendous amount of staff time and resources to complete. Can you assure me that, notwithstanding significant changes in law or scientific research, you will not attempt to undertake such a rewrite during your tenure as National Park Service director?

Answer. Yes. I am confident that the 2006 Management Policies provide us with both a steady hand to guide us in making difficult decisions that lie ahead, and flexibility to adjust to unusual situations where, for example, a strict application of the policies would not make sense. We must always be attentive—as you have implied to policy implications in changing circumstances, and be willing to make appropriate policy adjustments. Under the National Park Service's directives system, Director's Orders can serve as an efficient means for making specific adjustments to our policies.

Question 46. Some people have expressed concern that the Park Service is bringing in more vendors and corporate sponsors to help with funding concerns. What are your feelings about the appropriate role of private companies in the Parks?

Answer. I welcome philanthropic support from corporations as partners in the stewardship entrusted to our care. From its earliest days, the National Park Service has a history of partnership and cooperation with the private sector to bring services to visitors. The development of public accommodations, facilities, and services in parks are those that are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment of the park unit in which they are located. Various parks are developing commercial services plans with public input, using best available science and other information in order to determine the appropriate level of visitor services to be provided by commercial services.

Philanthropic support for programs and activities in our national parks is generally provided through donations to individual park friends groups or our national fundraising partner, the National Park Foundation. The acceptance of any donation to the NPS, regardless of the source, must maintain the integrity of our parks, the impartiality of the NPS, and public confidence in what we do.

NPS Director's Order #21 on Donations and Fundraising provides specific guidance on the recognition of corporate donors. They may receive recognition for their contributions on the same basis as other donors. Corporate logos are not allowed on donor boards or walls. Consistent with NPS regulations and policies, no advertising or marketing may occur within park unit boundaries. Additionally, government ethics regulations prohibit the NPS from endorsing a company's products, services, or enterprise.

Question 47. As you know, on August 25, 2006, the National Park Service celebrated its 90th anniversary. At that time Secretary Kempthorne announced a challenge to bring our Parks into better condition than before the centennial celebration in ten years. What ideas do you have to polish our nation's gems in the coming ten years?

Answer. The Centennial Challenge will provide the vehicle to develop a blueprint for the renewal of national parks heading up to the next century. I will respond to President's special memorandum which directed the Secretary to identify signature projects and programs that will help prepare the national parks for another century of conservation, preservation and enjoyment, and that will continue the NPS legacy of leveraging philanthropic, partnership, and government investments.

Question 48. In Colorado, we have 12 national park units, including Rocky Mountain National Park. As you know, parks across the country are struggling with budget cuts; closing visitor centers, not filling ranger positions, cutting back on interpretive programs. Will you be an advocate for increased funding for the National Park Service within the administration?

Answer. Yes, I will vigorously advocate for NPS funding within the Administration.

Question 49. I am pleased to see that you spent some time at Rocky Mountain National Park as an acting superintendent. What did you learn in that time about managing western Parks that differs from managing eastern Parks? At Rocky, the superintendent is currently taking remarkable steps to help limit the damage of air pollution on the Park. Will you be supportive of similar efforts of superintendents across the country to take actions to address specific, regional challenges that they face?

Answer. My tenure at Rocky Mountain National Park was a very enriching experience where I gained a true appreciation of the western spirit. However, I have found during my 16 years in the National Park Service that there are more similarities than differences in managing eastern and western parks, particularly in the case of large national parks. For example, although some of the specific resources may be different, many of the issues at Rocky Mountain National Park are similar to those at Shenandoah National Park or Acadia National Park—including air qual-

ity, wildlife management, community involvement, water, and weather. Issues relating to facility maintenance, visitor services, and planning are universal among parks, from our smallest urban historic sites to the largest natural resource parks.

Having had experience at so many different parks, I recognize that some parks have issues that are unique to the individual park or to the region where they are located. If confirmed, I will certainly support efforts of superintendents to take actions to address whatever specific challenges they face.

Question 50. The Administration testified in support of my Rocky Mountain National Park wilderness bill (S. 1510). If confirmed, I trust I can count on your support?

Answer. As you note, the Department testified earlier this year in support of S. 1510, and I support that position.

RESPONSES OF MARY A. BOMAR TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR MENENDEZ

Question 51. National Park Service is in the process of finalizing its report on whether to add the Great Falls Historic District in Paterson, New Jersey, as a unit of the National Park System. I have weighed in before with my strong support for the creation of the Great Falls National Historic Park, which is also enthusiastically supported by the entire bipartisan New Jersey congressional delegation, our governor, and the National Parks Conservation Association. I have been told that the study report should be out by the end of September 2006. Is that still the timeline?

Answer. The Special Resource Study on the Great Falls Historic District is scheduled to be released by the end of October. A 60-day public comment period will follow the release of the study.

Question 52. Is the nominee aware that the State of New Jersey is going to be providing upwards of 10 million dollars to help preserve the site?

Answer. I am aware that the Governor of New Jersey designated the Great Falls State Park as one of three urban state parks in October 2004 and the State has pledged \$10 million for its development. I applaud the State of New Jersey for this initiative and look forward to a continuation of our productive partnership with the State and the City of Paterson in preserving the resources of this special place in the history of American industrial development.

Question 53. Given the nominee's familiarity with urban parks as a result of her experience as superintendent of Independence National Historic Park, is the nominee aware of the spectacular opportunity that a park in Paterson would have for connecting millions of people to the national park system and our country's heritage?

Answer. One of the great benefits of being in a leadership position in the Northeast Region of the National Park Service is the opportunity to participate in the administration of important parks in the National Park System that serve urban populations and tell the stories of the early history of our Nation. In New Jersey, particularly, we have a unique mixture of recreational and cultural units of the National Park System including Gateway National Recreation Area, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Edison National Historic Site, and Morristown National Historical Park. We also have two affiliated areas that celebrate New Jersey's natural wonders; the Pinelands National Reserve comprising 22 percent of the State's land area and the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail. I believe that our continuing partnership with the City of Paterson will enable many visitors within the region to fully appreciate the important history and resources of Paterson's Great Falls Historic District.

Question 54. I understand the National Park Service is in the process of re-bidding the concession for the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Ferries. Could you update me as to where we are in that process?

Answer. We are working on an expedited prospectus development schedule that will have the prospectus for the new ferry service contract released on December 29, 2006. We just completed the project development phase, which is a major milestone in our plan to release the prospectus for the new ferry service.

Question 55. Could you clarify what is meant as an "add-on" to an NPS concession bid documents? I understand these to be potential services or elements of a concession that could be provided to NPS as part of an eventual concession agreement. Can you tell me how these "add-ons" are defined?

Answer. NPS concession contracts generally allow for additional "similar services" to be added to a concession contract after the issuance of that contract. These services must be consistent with the original intent of the contract.

Question 56. Have you solicited any ideas from the public, or from local groups with an interest in water transportation in the harbor, about any potential "add-ons" to the Statue of Liberty ferry concession?

Answer. General Management Plans are being undertaken for Governors Island National Monument, and the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island. These involve an extensive civic engagement process. Any public comments and suggestions about transportation or ferry service will be considered in the development of the final GMPs and in the development of the prospectus and commercial use authorizations.

Question 57. If ferry service to Governors Island, Sandy Hook, or other NPS sites in and around New York Harbor are part of the expressed NPS vision as embedded in the National Parks of New York Harbor initiative, how can we make sure this concession bid that NPS is currently developing explicitly communicates this desire, and this possibility to the potential operators?

Answer. Enhancing waterborne transportation to Gateway National Recreation Area units and Governors Island National Monument is a primary focus of the National Parks of New York Harbor (NPNH) collaboration. The NPNH business development staff is currently working directly with New York City leadership to initiate market and transportation studies focused on developing new uses of harbor destinations supported by water access. In addition, the NPNH Conservancy has obtained donated funding to develop a transportation strategy that links the inner and outer portions of New York Harbor with a special emphasis on Gateway National Recreation Area sites. This work will be combined with new leasing and concessions opportunities presently under consideration at selected sites to help make ferry service viable.

Question 58. It has been reported that the National Park Service has been testing new types of ferries that use more sustainable fueling systems in the Golden Gate area, and that two of these ferries are scheduled to be operating around Alcatraz by 2008. Given that the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area is also a non-attainment zone for a number of air pollutants, is the NPS looking at these clean ferry options for the New York Harbor ferry concession? Has any thought been given to including this as an "add-on" to the ferry concession bid?

Answer. The National Park Service is committed to providing visitor services in the most environmentally sustainable manner possible. NPS will explore the potential for any additional environmentally sustainable improvements to the existing equipment as we develop the prospectus. We will continue this practice at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island with regard to future transportation systems involving new equipment to serve our many visitors.

Question 59. Save Ellis Island, Inc., as a partner to the NPS, has experienced repeated delays (in the form of long, unexplained silences) in receiving consideration and responses to materials submitted to the NPS according to their stated procedures. Save Ellis Island (SEI) has raised more than \$32 million toward stabilization of the unrest red buildings, development of a master plan with alternatives, development and implementation of pilot educational and public programs connected to the island's historic themes, and various levels of restoration of three historic structures. In June 2003, the NPS released a Development Concept Plan for a 60-day comment period, which expired in August 2003. Since then, the NPS has refused to act on the plan or meet with Save Ellis Island, and I have been unable to get straight answers about the reasons for the delay. Would the nominee ensure that SEI receives timely and respectful consideration of its work to restore and adaptively reuse Ellis Island's 30 un-restored buildings? Will the nominee also commit to holding a meeting with Save Ellis Island within the first three months after her confirmation?

Answer. Renovation of the southside of Ellis Island is a high priority for Secretary Kempthorne and for me. We value our partnership with Save Ellis Island, Inc., and the good work it has accomplished. We are developing a new general agreement for the partnership and will be conducting updated market and feasibility analyses in FY 07. The results of these analyses will enable us to determine whether we should proceed with the current plan or appropriate modifications. I have had the opportunity to visit with representatives of SEI and most assuredly would be pleased to meet with them again.

Question 60. What steps would the nominee take to place consideration of the preferred Ellis Island reuse plan back in its appropriate regional office?

Answer. Steps that are being undertaken for the reuse of historic buildings on the South Side of Ellis Island include the development of a new general agreement and updated marketing and feasibility studies. I believe these steps will permit the NPS to discuss the future development of South Ellis with Save Ellis Island, Inc. and Congress based on current and detailed information.

Question 61. I have heard from some NPS partners that they feel their work is not being viewed or treated with respect. What steps will the Director take to re-

store the climate of mutual respect between the National Parks Service and its private partners?

Answer. The NPS recognizes philanthropic and volunteer support as both a noble tradition of the national parks and a vital element of the Service's success. Some national parks exist only because motivated citizens contributed time, talent, and funds to create them. The NPS actively engages the help of friends groups, which raise funds for programs, services, and projects in national parks, and non-profit cooperating associations, which return profits from national park bookstores to support interpretive and educational programs, services, and materials.

For example, the NPS actively engaged NPS friends groups and cooperating associations during the revision of Director's Order #21 on Donations and Fundraising. The NPS worked with the Friends Alliance (a consortium of NPS friends groups) and the Association of Partners for Public Lands throughout the revision of this policy document. Improvements included the recognition that each park and partner is unique and that one size does not fit all when working with partners. The revised Director's Order #21 was developed in response to input from our friends groups to provide needed flexibility in working with partners—from startup organizations to those with years of demonstrated success.

In my travels throughout the Northeast Region, I met with many partners, and conveyed my personal appreciation for their efforts on behalf of our parks. If I am confirmed, I can assure you that the NPS will continue to be actively engaged in the work of partners, assisting them in meeting mutually agreed-upon goals and recognizing the value their work brings to the NPS and the American people. The NPS Partnership Office helps to facilitate the work of park friends groups and the National Park Foundation. I also know that each of our seven regional offices have Regional Partnership Coordinators who help to ensure partnership success. Training for NPS personnel, frequently done in league with our partners, will continue to build a culture of partnership in all fields and at all levels.

Question 62. What is the nominee's opinion of public-private partnerships to support the needs of our national parks? Does she view them primarily as a way to create "value-added" programs and improvements to the parks or does she view them as a way to replace operating and maintenance funds now in such scarce supply?

Answer. I believe that public-private partnerships are an important element of enhancing the programs of our national parks, a means of enriching services, and an important way to foster long-term stewardship for our national parks. The benefits of working in partnership often extend into the future, because many people who participate as partners connect more strongly with the parks and commit themselves to their long-term care.

NPS policy specifically states that donations are used to enhance NPS programs and to help achieve excellence. Donations are not to be used as offsets to appropriated funds or to meet recurring operational requirements. The NPS appreciates the generosity of those who donate directly and those who work through authorized nonprofit organizations that raise funds for the benefit of the park units and programs.